

EXHIBIT B

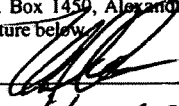


IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re Application of:	John Stachowiak, Jr.	§	Group Art Unit:	2831
		§		
Serial No.:	10/823,285	§		
		§		
Date Filed:	April 13, 2004	§	Examiner:	Patel, Dhirubhai R.
		§		
Title:	Apparatus and Method for Securing a Watt-hour Meter Socket Box	§		
		§		
		§	Docket No.:	D31012US
		§		

Mail Stop Amendment
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Signature 
 Date July 25, 2006

RESPONSE TO OFFICE ACTION OF JANUARY 25, 2006

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I. Request for Three-Month Extension of Time

Applicant requests a three-month extension of time for reply to the Office Action of January 25, 2006.

II. Amendments to the Claims:

In response to the Office Action of January 25, 2006, please amend the above-identified application as follows. This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings of claims in the application:

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1. (Currently amended) An apparatus for securing a box cover to a meter box, said apparatus comprising:

a clamping member, ~~an engagement member~~, wherein said clamping member

10 ~~engagement member~~ further comprises a body portion, a clamp comprising a
surrounding member which surrounds at least a part of said body portion wherein said
surrounding member comprises at least one engagement surface, a clamp actuating
member, and a fastening shelf having a first securing means; and
a lock housing having a second securing means.

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2. (Original) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein said clamp further comprises opposed, substantially parallel walls on which a pivoting member is disposed.

3. (Original) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein said first securing means further
20 comprises a portion of said fastening shelf through which an aperture has been formed.

4. (Original) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein said second securing means comprises a portion of said lock housing through which an aperture has been formed.

5. (Currently amended) The apparatus of either of claims 3 or 4, wherein each of said apertures ~~is~~ are ~~an~~ approximately cylindrical ~~aperture~~ apertures.

5 6. (Original) The apparatus of claim 1, further comprising a plunger type fastener.

7. (Original) The apparatus of claim 6, wherein said plunger type fastener further comprises a retaining member.

10 8. (Currently amended) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein said clamp actuating member rotates about a rotational axis established by disposition of an ~~said~~ engagement member on said ~~a~~ body portion of said clamping member.

15 9. (Original) The apparatus of claim 2, wherein said clamp actuating member is captured between said opposed, substantially parallel walls of said clamp when said clamp actuating member is disposed in a fully secured position.

20 10. (Previously presented) The apparatus of claim 8, wherein one end of said clamp actuating member receives an input force and rotates about an axis established by disposition of said engagement member disposed on said clamping member, and then

translates a mechanical force to an opposite end of said clamp actuating member that is greater than the input force.

11. (Original) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein said clamp actuating member has a
5 tactile feedback indicator for indicating when said clamp actuating member has been fully rotated into a secure position.

12. (Original) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein said clamp is disposed between said clamp actuating member and said fastening shelf.

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13. (Original) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein said clamp further comprises a stopping member for stopping a rotational sweep of said clamp actuating member after said clamp actuating member is disposed in a fully secured position.

15 14. (Original) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein said clamp imparts a spring force that holds said clamp actuating member in a fully secured position.

15. (Currently amended) A method for securing a box cover to a meter box, said method comprising:

20 disposing a clamping member over a wall portion of said meter box, ~~disposing an~~

~~engagement member on a body portion of said clamping member~~, wherein said clamping member comprises a body portion, a clamp comprising a surrounding member which surrounds at least a part of said body portion wherein said surrounding member comprises at least one engagement surface, a clamp actuating member, and a

5 fastening shelf having a first securing means;

disposing a lock housing in functional cooperation with said clamping member, wherein said lock housing comprises a second securing means; and

securing said clamping member using said lock housing.

10 16. (Original) The method of claim 15, further comprising disposing a fastening shelf so that said first securing means comprises a body portion of said fastening shelf through which an aperture has been formed.

15 17. (Currently amended) The method of claim 16, further comprising disposing a lock housing so that said second securing means comprises said a lock housing through which an aperture has been formed.

18. (Currently amended) The apparatus of claim 17, further comprising disposing a fastening shelf and said a lock housing so that said first securing means and said second

20 securing means comprise approximately cylindrical apertures.

19. (Original) The method of claim 15, further comprising disposing a plunger type fastener.

5 20. (Original) The method of claim 19, further comprising disposing a plunger type fastener, and then securing said plunger type fastener by means of a retaining member.

21. (Currently amended) The method of claim 15, further comprising rotating said clamp actuating member about a rotational axis established by disposition of an said
10 engagement member disposed on said body portion of said clamping member.

22. (Previously presented) The method of claim 21, further comprising:

delivering an input force to one end of said clamp actuating member so that said clamp

actuating member rotates about a rotational axis established by disposition of said

15 engagement member on said clamping member; and

translating said input force into a mechanical clamping force that is greater than the input force.

23. (Original) The method of claim 15, further comprising disposing a clamp actuating member having a tactile feedback indicator to indicate when said clamp actuating member has been fully rotated into a secure position.

5 24. (Original) The method of claim 15, further comprising disposing said clamp between said clamp actuating member and said fastening shelf.

25. (Original) The method of claim 24, further comprising disposing a clamp having a stopping member, wherein said stopping member stops a rotational sweep of said clamp
10 actuating member after said clamp actuating member is disposed in a fully secured position.

26. (Original) The method of claim 24, further comprising disposing a clamp imparting a spring force that holds said clamp actuating member in a fully secured position.

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27. (Cancelled)

III. Remarks/Arguments

With regard to the Examiner's Amendment dated March 5, 2005 which was authorized by a telephone interview with Raymond Ferrera on March 2, 2005, claims 1, 8, 10, 15, 21, and 22 were amended and claim 27 was cancelled in accordance with the
 5 above Examiner's Amendment, however, Applicant has further amended certain claims for clarification as noted in the Amendments to the Claims and as explained below.

With regard to the January 25, 2006 Office Action, claims 17-18 were objected to because of informalities. Applicant has cured these by the amendments, which were made to clarify the claims. Claim 17 has been amended so that the phrase in lines 1-2, "a
 10 lock housing" reads "said lock housing," and claim 18 has been amended so that the phrase in lines 1-2 "a lock housing" reads "said lock housing."

Claims 1, 3-7, 12, 15-20 and 24 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Rafferty (6,763,691). Applicant traverses the rejections and believes that these claims and the other dependent claims are patentable over Rafferty and reserves the
 15 right to prosecute these claims and others in this or another application.

However, in order to advance prosecution of the present above-referenced application, independent claims 1 and 15 have been amended for clarification as explained herein. Claim 1 has been amended to delete reference to the "engagement member" which was unclear and to include the following clarifying language (in
 20 quotations): wherein said "clamping member" further comprises "a body portion," a clamp "comprising a surrounding member which surrounds at least a part of said body portion wherein said surrounding member comprises at least one engagement surface." Method claim 15 has also been amended to delete reference to the "engagement member" which was unclear and to include the following clarifying language (in quotations):
 25 wherein said clamping member further comprises "a body portion," a clamp "comprising a surrounding member which surrounds at least a part of said body portion wherein said surrounding member comprises at least one engagement surface." Support for the amendment of claims 1 and 15 is found, for example, on pages 9-10.

These clarifying amendments are more clearly distinguishable over Rafferty. Rafferty discloses in FIG. 3 a jaw 38 and two flanges 30, 32. Rafferty also recites in claim 1, a jaw carried for "movement between" two flanges. Applicant has a different structural configuration with the clamp comprising a "surrounding member which surrounds at least a part of said body portion" and where the surrounding member "comprises at least one engagement surface." In view of these and other limitations, Applicant's claims are distinguishable over Rafferty. Rafferty has a different structural relationship and does not include each and every limitation of the pending claims. That is, nowhere does Rafferty teach these limitations in combination with the other elements of the claims as now amended.

The following further amendments have been made for clarification purposes: claim 5 has been amended so that it correctly reads "each of said apertures is an approximately cylindrical aperture"; dependent claim 8 has been amended to change "said" engagement member to "an" engagement member because the reference to engagement member has been deleted from claim 1 and to change "a" body portion to "said" body portion because the reference to body portion has been added to claim 1; also, dependent claim 21 has been amended to change "said" engagement member to "an" engagement member because the reference to engagement member has been deleted from claim 15.

Claims 2, 8-11, 13-14, 21-23 and 25-26 were objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim. Applicant appreciates Examiner's indication that these claims would be allowable if rewritten in independent form in accordance with the Office Action. However, since the base independent claim 1 and base independent claim 15 have been amended as noted herein, their respective dependent claims are now distinguishable over Rafferty with the limitations in claims 1 and 15 as now amended.

In view of the above, applicant respectfully submits that claim 1 with claims 2-14

dependent thereon and claim 15 with claims 16-26 dependent thereon are now in condition for allowance.

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Date: July 25, 2006

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Respectfully submitted,



Michael A. Evans, Esq.

Reg. No. 57,028

DeWalch Technologies, Inc.

6850 Wynnwood Lane

Houston, Texas 77008

Tel.: 713-861-8993

Fax: 713-861-8997

ATTORNEY FOR APPLICANT